

On behalf of the BLM National Training Center in Phoenix, Arizona, I'd like to welcome you to the NEPA Analyzing Impacts course. I'm Cathy Humphrey, the training coordinator for Planning, NEPA and Alternative Dispute Resolution here at the National Training Center. You'll see me from time to time in this short course.

The National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, requires federal agencies to disclose environmental impacts of actions that may significantly affect the quality of the human environment, and one thing I've observed and experienced is that this is a very difficult task. Most of you are highly trained in your specialty, all of you want to do a good job, but as you know, it takes more than that to be successful. You need to be trained in how to analyze impacts in a methodical, sound and defensible way, and that's where this course comes in.

Although there is no prerequisite, we've developed this course with the assumption that you are familiar with NEPA and that you've done some NEPA analysis. If, however, you aren't even sure how to spell NEPA, we have an introductory course that's also available online that you might want to take first, and it's called "NEPA Concepts - Module 1," which is NEPA, and, "2 - CEQ Regulations." You can register for it through DOI Learn. Just search for Course Number 1620-17. That's the easiest way to find it.

So the goal of this course is to improve the analysis and documentation of your environmental impacts. When you complete this course, you should be able to map out a cause-and-effect strategy before you start to analyze the impacts, and then you should be able to write an impact analysis that's more complete and systematic and, therefore, it should be more defensible.

The course is divided into two main lessons, and there's even a bonus lesson at

the end. Lesson 1, it's the cause-and-effect analysis, and that's where you prepare for your analysis. And then Lesson 2, that's the impact analysis in which you conduct the analysis. And the bonus lesson is how to determine significance.

So you're not required to go through the bonus lesson. It's not included in the post test, so it won't affect your grade either way, but we have included a nongraded self-assessment at the end of the significance lesson, and that will show you if you've learned the material. So it's a good lesson. You might want to take it anyway.

So, the post test that follows this course, you need to get 80 percent to receive credit.

The course may be a little different than some of the other computer-based courses that you've taken. It's different in that you'll be watching some video clips of the instructor, and then it will be followed by a series of interactive exercises. These exercises are going to provide you with the opportunities to recall and comprehend and practice the material that has been presented to you. Then after you've completed each exercise, the instructor will give answers, his answers, so that you can compare them with yours.

And remember, you'll get out of this course what you put into it, and although it would be really easy just to skip the exercises and go to the answers, you'll learn a lot more if you take time to do the exercises yourself. And it might even be more fun, you might even learn a little bit more, if you take the course with a buddy or two.

This course is taught by Matt Peterson, who works for SWCA Environmental Consultants. He has more than 15 years experience in NEPA compliance and permitting. He's overseen, managed or worked as a Resource Specialist on 23 major EIS's. Lot of those were for the Bureau of Land Management and other federal

agencies.

Okay. Let's begin with Lesson 1. It's a cause-and-effect analysis, and that's where you prepare to do your analysis, and by the end of the lesson, you should be able to do the following: Identify potential direct and indirect effects to a given resource or program, identify resource indicators to measure each impact, determine the methodology to measure the impacts, and then finally, identify potential data needs to complete the analysis.

Okay, good luck with Lesson 1.